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BOOK REVIEWS.

DIE ETHIK DER ALTEN GRIECHEN, dargestellt von Leopold Schmidt. Berlin: Wilhelm Hertz, 1882. 2 vols. 8vo. Pp. 400, 494.

This book is one of those monuments of industry which at present Germany alone seems capable of producing. The author has ransacked the whole of pagan Greek literature, and apparently extracted from it everything having any bearing upon ethics, theoretical or practical. What he has found he has classified and made the material for certain general conclusions. The titles of the books and chapters of the work will show his arrangement:

Introduction.—On the Sources of our Knowledge of Greek Ethics. *Book I.*—General Ethical Notions of the Ancient Greeks. Chapter I. The Religious Implications of Morality. Chapter II. The Motives of Ethical Goodness. Chapter III. The Causes of Deviation from the Good. Chapter IV. The Terminology of Good and Evil. *Book II.*—The Different Spheres of Duty, according to Greek Notions. Chapter I. Man in Relation to the Gods. Chapter II. Man in Relation to Natural Environment. Chapter III. Man in Relation to the Dead. Chapter IV. Man in Relation to the Family. Chapter V. Man in Relation to the State. Chapter VI. Man in Relation to his Fellows. Chapter VII. The Relation of Guest-Friendship. Chapter VIII. Friendship and Enmity. Chapter IX. Man and his Belongings. Chapter X. Man in Relation to Himself.

This arrangement shows that the work aims at classifying the facts of Greek ethics rather than at recording their history and inner connection, or reducing them to fundamental principles. Whether such an aim can, under any circumstances, lead to the best result may be fairly doubted. In the present case it certainly has not, and for the reason that the historical element has been too much neglected. No account of Greek ethics can be satisfactory which does not fully recognize that Greek ethical ideals, theories, and practices were very different in the different epochs of Greek history, and even in the same epoch among different portions of the race. The ethics of Homer's time were not the ethics of Aristotle's, still less those of Lucian's, while at any given date there was a wide difference between the ethics of Athens, Sparta, Corinth, Ephesus, Sybaris. It follows that to quote Homer and Xenophon on the same page, as witnesses to the same facts, is to give an entirely false impression, and to ignore the most conspicuous thing about the Greek people,—namely, their rapid advance in civilization. As well might we quote together Cædmon, Langlande, Chaucer, Carlyle, and Emerson as witnesses to the same facts with reference to the English people.

Any one who wishes to present the ethical views and practices of the Greeks must not only follow the historian step by step, but he must also, at every step, carefully distinguish between practice and theory, and show how the two interacted. The theories of Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle, for example, play an important part in Greek ethics; but they cannot be quoted as embodying the facts of Greek life. This also the author of the present work has failed fully to recognize.

This suggests the question whether it is at all possible to treat the ethics of a race or a people as a single and distinct subject, whether they must not rather be viewed as a series of phases of one side of life,—phases determined by manifold

causes, which in each case must be carefully investigated. The answer does not seem doubtful. To take a single example: no one will deny that the ethics of Epicurus played an important part in the world for at least five hundred years. Now, this system has none of the "religious implications" which the author seems to say underlie all Greek ethics; nay, it has not even their political implications. The truth is, we cannot treat Greek ethics, any more than English or French ethics, as a whole, and it is only the remoteness of the Greeks that makes us think we can. We must, then, regard the author's method as erroneous, and no less misleading than would be a method which in art should disregard the difference of conditions under which were produced the reliefs from Mycenæ and the Hermes of Praxiteles.

But when we have made these deductions from the value of the book, we still find in it very much that is worthy of praise. It is a perfect storehouse of facts in regard to Greek ethics, facts classified under certain non-ethical rubrics. It is an excellent *Vorarbeit* for a history or for a philosophy of Greek ethics. Again, it calls attention to many important facts in connection with ethical institutions. For example, it points out that when, in the process of ethical development, a people is passing from a lower to a higher and more comprehensive form of organization, it is very likely to show a rebellious spirit towards the lower, and for a time to abandon itself to an exaggerated and anarchic individualism. When, however, it has reached the higher organization, it returns to the lower, readopts it, and imparts to it a new significance. Thus each narrower institution becomes transformed in the light of the next wider, and of all above it. Thus, the rise of the Church was for a time prejudicial to the State; but when the Church was fully organized, states sprang up in its bosom with new and loftier aims than had been known to any of those existing previously. Does the same principle explain our present anarchic individualism?

THOMAS DAVIDSON.

ESSAYS ON EDUCATIONAL REFORMERS. By Robert Herbert Quick, M.A. (Trin. Coll., Camb.), etc. London: Longman, Green & Co., 1890.

This is to all intents a new book, though a considerable part of the substance of it appeared as far back as 1868. It is a book which ought to be read with attention not only (as it doubtless will) by all who are interested in education, but also by all who are interested in ethics, or indeed in human life. It is not merely a record of the vagaries of human opinion and human practice with regard to education, but a continuous history of the development of ideas, treated with constant reference to the great aims of life. Written by a man who is not a mere theorist, still less a mere student of the theories of others, but who has had in addition the advantage of long and varied experience as a teacher, it is as full of wisdom and practical insight as of speculative suggestiveness. The style of the book is clear and interesting, though occasionally a little diffuse, and is often illuminated by happy quotations from the writer's favorite authors,—one of whom is evidently Carlyle.

As an indication of the spirit in which the work is done, the following extract will perhaps serve as well as any other. After stating that the aim of a true teacher must be to hold up an ideal for the life of his pupils; and that, for this end, he must constantly say of himself, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that